



Request for Proposals

A Request for Proposals to provide research, consultation and support to the ECIC and its partners in efforts to improve the ways in which current funding for early childhood services is used in Michigan and to establish short and long term strategies for financing Michigan's comprehensive early childhood system.

***Proposals Due By 12:00 Noon (EST)
on Friday, February 8, 2008***

Project Summary:

Background: A core priority of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) is to provide leadership on how early childhood programs and services are financed in Michigan and to develop strategies to improve and expand support for a comprehensive early childhood system. As a first step in this work, ECIC contracted for technical assistance to thoroughly understand how early childhood services are funded in Michigan. The product from this 1st Phase of work is a report entitled *Financing a Great Start for Michigan's Children* (herein after, referred to as "Phase 1 Report" and can be reviewed by following this link.)

http://www.ecic4kids.org/documents/GreatStart_FP.pdf. In the Phase 1 Report, current funding in Michigan was identified and assessed according to the 5 component areas of a comprehensive early childhood system. (Basic Needs & Economic Security; Physical Health Care; Social-Emotional Health; Parenting Education and Family Support; and Early Education and Care.

The activities described in this RFP will build on the work that has been completed. This 2nd phase of work is organized into following three parts.

- To increase public awareness of constituent groups, stakeholders, consumers and policymakers so that there is a broader understanding of the early childhood financing picture in Michigan including both its strengths as well as the challenges in moving to a fully financed comprehensive early childhood system.
- To develop short, mid, and long term strategies for adequately funding a comprehensive early childhood system in Michigan. The strategies will place a strong emphasis on assessing the ways in which existing funding is used; where there may be opportunities for consolidating funding streams; whether Michigan takes full advantage of leveraging opportunities; and whether there are unnecessary policy barriers that impede collaborative efforts at the community level.
- To assure Great Start Collaboratives are well versed in the findings in the Phase 1 report, and to support local efforts to assess how funds coming into GSC communities support components of local early childhood systems.

The successful bidder will work with ECIC staff, ECIC Board Advisory Committees, local Great Start Collaboratives, and the Advisory Body to this project on the following components.

- I. Work with ECIC on efforts to use the Phase 1 Report as an education tool on early childhood financing in Michigan
 - In consultation with ECIC, develop;
 - a "stand alone" Executive Summary of the report
 - a set of PowerPoint slides to be used by ECIC in presenting
 - Work with ECIC on strategies for presenting to key stakeholders and policy-making audiences.
 - Participate in presentations (audiences to be determined by ECIC – would be planned around 4 events)
 - Assist ECIC in developing presentations and provide training/support for ECIC presenters. Audiences will include;

- Governmental: (Governor’s office; budgetary leadership; department leadership; legislative leadership including Children’s Caucus and house and senate fiscal)
- Community Level: Great Start Collaboratives; Parent Coalitions
- ECIC Executive Committee and External Advisory Board Committees

II. Provide consultation and research support to ECIC for each of the following.

- ***Develop a Clear Plan for Full Implementation:***
As noted above, in the *Phase 1 Report*, current funding in Michigan was identified and assessed according to the 5 component areas of a comprehensive early childhood system. (Basic Needs & Economic Security; Physical Health Care; Social-Emotional Health; Parenting Education and Family Support; and Early Education and Care. Currently ECIC has 4 Board Advisory Groups, each of which is focused on one of these component areas. (The issues of Basic Needs and Economic Security cut across all of the other 4 and are therefore part of the analysis for each of the 4 Advisory Groups.) Each of the 4 Board Advisory groups has identified strategic priorities for their respective component area of focus.
 - Plan and deliver educational sessions for each of the 4 Board Advisory Groups to assure that membership is well versed in the analysis and findings in the Phase 1 Report.
 - Work with each of the Board Advisory Groups to assess their strategic priorities from a financing perspective and to develop realistic, obtainable plans for improving the ways in which the priorities are funded in short, mid and long term timeframes.
 - Work with ECIC staff, board and project advisory committee to integrate the priorities and financing strategies of the Board Advisory Committees into a comprehensive financing plan with short, mid and long term strategies.
- ***Identify Potential financing strategies and funding sources to fill gaps:***
Assist ECIC in a deeper analysis of current funding for the 5 component areas of a comprehensive early childhood system. The response to the RFP should articulate the kinds of strategies to use for assessing each of the following.
 - The extent to which opportunities exist for consolidating funding streams and strategies to coordinate and make better use of existing resources at the state and local level
 - Whether Michigan takes full advantage of leveraging opportunities (between/among federal, state, local public and private funds)
 - Whether there are unnecessary policy barriers that impede collaborative efforts at the community level
 - Strategies to increase investment where needed
- ***Look at innovative ways that other states and communities have utilized creative financing strategies and funding sources to support comprehensive early childhood support systems***
 - Based on discussions with ECIC and the Advisory Board, conduct research on work done in other states to finance aspects of early childhood services including examples of administrative processes that facilitate blending and braiding of funding streams.
 - Assist ECIC to use the knowledge from these efforts to inform both state and local programming and policies.

III. Provide support to the Great Start Collaboratives

- ***Provide technical assistance and support to local GSC efforts to analyze the funding available at the community level.***
The Great Start Collaboratives have the performance measures in their current contracts with ECIC to increase understanding of the ways early childhood programs and services are financed at the local level and to incorporate that knowledge into ongoing strategic

planning. To date GSC's have received a template to use in conducting local assessments, and have received orientation training on its use. The response to this bid should describe how the bidder will support the GSC's on the following activities.

- Assist GSC's to assess how federal, state, and local (public and private) funds support elements of a comprehensive early childhood system.
- Provide guidance to GSC's in using their increased understanding of the local financing picture, into their strategic plans for strengthening their local early childhood system.

Schedule:

- 1) The responses to the Request for Proposals (RFP) with financial proposals and finalized research teams are due by **Friday, February 8, 2008**.
- 2) ECIC will establish a rating and reading review team and finish the process by **Friday, February 15, 2008**.
- 3) Selection of consulting firm or contractor will occur by **Friday, February 22, 2008**.
- 4) Successful bidder will begin **no later than March 1, 2008** with the goal of all deliverables completed by **October 31, 2008**.

Payment Schedules:

The successful bidder will be responsible for deliverables based on timelines in a contract with ECIC for the project. A payment schedule will be developed that will link reimbursement to completion of, or indicators of substantiated progress on deliverables.

Selection Criteria:

Responses to this RFP will be judged, based on the following criteria:

1. The proposal presents a clear and concise description of the work to be undertaken with a credible presentation of how the efforts will achieve the deliverables, outcomes or goals as described in this RFP.
2. The bidder has experience and expertise necessary to conduct the work being proposed.
3. The proposed price is reasonable given the proposed scope of work.
4. The consulting firm or consultant demonstrates a consistent record of research excellence, data integrity, analysis, and methodology in previous work.
5. The proposed consulting firm or consultant has successfully completed equally specialized studies.
6. The consulting firm and principal consultant(s) or consultant must demonstrate through their submissions an understanding of the complexity of a comprehensive early childhood system, and the purpose of the project including background and expertise in analyzing early childhood financing issues at local, state and federal levels.
7. The demonstrated ability to attain ECIC's goals as related to this initiative based on previous successfully completed projects.
8. A demonstration of past team collaborations involving data collection and research, including the coordination of work with state department heads, associations,

colleges, and other such project team members.

RFP Contents-Submittal Requirements should be organized In the following manner:

1. Summary response to the RFP (1 page).
2. Methodological approach (no more than 6 pages).
3. A statement of organizational capabilities including relevant effort in the past 5 years to indicate appropriate experience and expertise to successfully complete the work as described in this RFP. The statement should include a list of proposed staff and/or contractors including their roles and experience and expertise related to the scope of work to be performed.
4. The financial proposal should include **a line item budget and narrative** as well as the following - A detailed budget breakdown by task that is organized into the following categories below. (Each task should be estimated separately.)
 - Labor costs
 - Other direct costs
 - Meeting costs
 - Materials and reproduction
 - Travel and per diem
 - Data entry
 - Indirect Costs/administrative overhead
 - Presentation materials

General Information

This Request for Proposal (RFP) provides interested bidders with sufficient information to prepare and submit proposals for consideration by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation.

1. Contract Award

Contract award negotiations will be undertaken with those bidders whose proposals, as to price and other factors, show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the work.

The contract entered into will be that contract most advantageous to ECIC, price and other factors considered. ECIC reserves the right to consider proposals or modifications thereof received at any time before the award is made, if such action is in the best interest of ECIC.

If a contract is awarded, the selected bidder will be required to comply with the General Provisions, which will be a part of the contract.

2. Rejection of Proposals

This RFP is made for information or planning purposes only. ECIC reserves the right to propose modifications to an applicant's proposal – including membership of the team, methodology, total cost or individual budget line items. ECIC also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or call for additional submittals. ECIC may call previous clients of other projects completed by the bidder even if they are not on a reference list. ECIC reserves the right to negotiate a final project cost with any bidder the ECIC determines to have submitted a high quality proposal and has demonstrated the experience and expertise to successfully deliver the products described in this RFP. This RFP may be modified or canceled at any time prior to contracts being awarded. ECIC does not intend to award a contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or otherwise pay for the information solicited or obtained.

ECIC reserves the right to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to serve the best interest of ECIC.

3. Incurring Costs

The ECIC is not liable for any cost incurred by the Contractors prior to issuance of a contract.

4. All submissions must be bound securely, in an 8 1/2" X 11" format.

5. Inquiries

Questions that arise as a result of this RFP must be submitted in writing to the ECIC. All questions must be submitted on or before the date specified on the cover letter.

Deliver five (5) copies no later than Friday, February 8, 2008 to the attention of:

**Michael Foley
Early Childhood Investment Corporation
221 N. Pine
Lansing, Michigan 48933**